



MAINE FARMER, - - - EXTRA.

A CIRCULAR,

FROM THE STATE LAND OFFICE, DESCRIPTIVE OF THE PUBLIC LANDS OF MAINE, 1858.

INTRODUCTORY.—In order to answer the numerous calls and inquiries addressed to the Land Office, for information respecting the quality, situation, and extent of our "settling lands," the terms and conditions of sale, the character of the soil, climate of the country, condition of roads, distances to market, modes of conveyance, &c., &c., necessity seems to require at my hands the preparation of a Circular embracing the above information.

In the preparation of this Circular, I shall attempt little more than a brief compilation, from the Statutes, Public Documents, and Records of this Office, of such facts and observations as are deemed necessary to answer the demands of the public.

While printed documents have been for years accumulating in the archives of the State, many of which contain valuable information relative to our public lands, still it would seem from the inquiries constantly made, that this information has not been properly disseminated among the masses of our citizens, the laboring classes, whom it would more essentially benefit.

Among these valuable documents, and from which I shall take the liberty to make such extracts as are deemed important to my present purpose, I would refer the reader to the valuable Reports of Dr. E. Holmes and Dr. C. T. Jackson on the Geological, and Agricultural capabilities of the Aroostook region; the Reports of former Land Agents; and the late valuable Report of S. L. Goodale, Esq., Secretary of the Board of Agriculture.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SALE.—In the Revised Statutes of Maine, Chapter 5, may be found all the provisions of law in relation to

The Sale of Lands for Settlement.

SEC. 23. Out of townships located and designated for settlement, the land agent shall, from time to time, select, not exceeding ten in a year, to be offered for sale in lots for settlement; and publish a list of them and of the townships offered for sale and settlement in former years, in which lands still remain for sale, in some paper in each county in the State in which any paper is published, once a week for three months, within six months after the selection is so made, with the substance of so much of this chapter as relates to the terms and conditions of the sale and settlement of such lands.

SEC. 24. In townships so selected, in which suitable roads have not been located, the land agent shall cause such roads to be located as the public interest and the accommodation of the future settlement require.

SEC. 25. The price of the settling lots shall be fifty cents per acre, for which the purchaser shall give three notes, payable in one, two and three years, in labor on the roads in said township, under the direction of the land agent. The land agent shall thereupon give him a certificate, stating that he has become a purchaser of the lot or lots therein described, and that he will be entitled to a deed thereof, when he complies with the requirements of law.

The certificate of the person appointed by the land agent to superintend the laying out of the labor on the roads, shall be evidence of the payment of the notes. Only one lot not exceeding two hundred acres, shall be granted to the same person.

SEC. 26. Beside the payment of the notes, every such purchaser shall be required, within two years from the date of his certificate, to establish his residence on his lot, and within four years from such date to clear, on each lot, not less than fifteen acres, ten at least of which shall be well laid down to grass; and to build a comfortable dwelling house on it.

SEC. 27. If the purchaser fails to perform any of the duties required of him, or to pay his notes, he forfeits all right to the land; and the land agent may dispose of it to another person.

SEC. 28. The land agent shall appoint some suitable person or persons in the vicinity to superintend the location of settlers, the payment of their road labor, and the performance of their several duties.

SEC. 29. Whoever purchases a lot of wild land of the State, not exceeding one hundred and sixty acres, and complies with the condition of purchase, may hold it with the improvements thereon, free from attachment and levy on execution, while he remains in actual possession thereof. The value so exempted shall not exceed one thousand dollars, to be set off to the owner in such portions of the lot as he directs, by the appraiser appointed to levy an execution, the same as real estate is set off and appraised on execution.

SEC. 30. On the decease of such purchaser, such lot and the improvements shall descend to his children, subject to his widow's right of dower, and shall not be liable to be sold for the payment of his debts, except in case his other property is not sufficient for the payment thereof; and, in that case, his children shall have the occupancy and improvement thereof, subject to the widow's dower, until, the youngest surviving child attains the age of eighteen years. The remainder of the estate, after the life estate of the widow, and after the youngest surviving child attains said age, may be sold as other estates of deceased persons for the payment of such debts as the other estate of the deceased is not sufficient to pay. If he dies without issue, such lot shall descend and be disposed of as any other property.

SEC. 31. No such purchaser, having a wife, shall convey his said lot by deed, unless his wife joins therein, and acknowledges it to be her free act and deed before a proper magistrate.

SEC. 32. The land agent may sell at public or private sale for such price as he considers fair and for the interest of the State all tracts of land owned by the State on islands or in incorporated towns.

Under the provisions of this law, there have already been located and designated for settlement, and by former land agents selected and published for sale, the following townships, viz:

Township.	Acres.	Acres Unsold.	Remarks.
11, R. 1	11,520	6,747	On Houlton and Baring road.
B. R. 1	11,520	10,002	Mills and Post Office.
C. R. 1	23,040	22,610	Lotted in 1855-6.
D. R. 1	23,040	5,499	Fort Fairfield, Post Office, and Mills.
E. R. 1	23,040	21,760	Mills on the Limestone Stream.
F. R. 2	23,040	14,359	Presque Isle, much settled.
G. R. 2	19,685	19,510	Mills—not all lotted.
H. R. 2	14,638	3,157	Lyndon Post Office, Mills, &c.
I. R. 2	23,040	23,040	Partly lotted in 1856.
12, R. 3	23,040	16,017	Lotted in 1843—settled.
13, R. 3	23,040	23,040	Salmon Brook, Plantation, Mills, &c.
4, R. 4	23,040	22,157	Lotted in 1855-6.
9, R. 4	23,040	21,312	Lotted in 1859—old Mills.
12, R. 4	23,040	22,890	North half lotted in 1855—Castle Hill P. O.
3, R. 5	22,011	21,117	On the Aroostook Road.
4, R. 5	23,040	6,404	Crystal Pt. Mills, &c.
6, R. 5	23,040	2,535	On Aroostook Road—Moro Post Office.
8, R. 5	23,040	13,093	Lotted in 1839. Li me quarry.
10, R. 5	23,040	15,777	Masardis, Post Office, &c.
11, R. 5	23,040	9,205	Ashland, lotted in 1839.
6, R. 6	23,040	14,128	On Aroostook Road.
9, R. 6	23,040	11,428	"Ox-bow," Unquocton Mills.
11, R. 6	23,040	2,539	Mills—Lotted in 1839.
13, R. 6	23,040	1,413	Fortage Lake Plantation.

In addition to the foregoing, there were located and designated for settlement, by a Resolve of the last Legislature, the following townships, viz:—Letter G., R. 1; L. and M., R. 2; East half of 2, R. 5; and 5, R. 3; all west from the east line of the State.

These townships will be lotted and ready for the market, as fast as the future wants of settlers shall require. The field notes and plans of all the townships which have been lotted for settlement, are in the Land Office, open for inspection, where all information within the means of the Agent, to secure to individuals and companies the benefits and privileges intended by the Legislature for actual settlers, will be cheerfully given.

It will be seen by an inspection of the map, that, in designating townships for settlement, the Legislature has, from time to time, selected most, if not all of them in the county of Aroostook.

Still, out of the two million acres of land now owned by the State, less than one half of the whole quantity, (or about 984,000 acres) lies in that county. In Somerset, the State has over a half million of acres, and in Piscataquis about half as much more,—the remainder lying mostly in the counties of Franklin, Oxford, and Penobscot. A portion of these lands, especially of those in Piscataquis, will at no distant day, be sought after for purposes of agriculture. New settlements are already springing up in the vicinity of the Chesuncook and Chamberlain lakes, and a grant of land in aid of building mills for the settlers, was made by the last Legislature. But roads must be opened into that section of the State, before the current of emigration will set very strongly in that direction.

Aroostook is now the main point of attraction, where, with the unsettled lands now owned by proprietors, we have a territory nearly as extensive as the whole commonwealth of Massachusetts, and which is capable of sustaining a vast population. I find by official Reports, that the first decided and efficient move towards the development of the Aroostook region was in 1838, when, under the direction of the Board of Internal Improvements, an exploration and survey of the Aroostook valley was made by Dr. Ezekiel Holmes, in order to ascertain the practicability of establishing a water communication between the tributaries of the Penobscot and St. John rivers, with a reference also to the topography and agricultural capabilities of this region. Dr. Charles T. Jackson was also engaged the same year, in making a geological survey of the public lands, and their published Reports afforded the first reliable information given to the public, of the character and resources of this district, and, at the time, attracted general and favorable attention.

The following extracts from Dr. Jackson's Reports of the Geology of the Public Lands, will show the

Value of these Lands for Settlement.

Speaking of the Aroostook country, the Doctor says:—

"The average width of the alluvial region on the Aroostook river, cannot be less than six or eight miles, and in some places it is much wider. It is a well wooded region, and is the best settling land in the State, equalling in fertility the famed region of the Western States, and capable even under a less congenial climate, of producing crops of wheat and other grain, fully equal in abundance with any soils of which we have any records. We here found a yellow loam of a fine kind, derived from the limestone rocks, and luxuriant in its produce, and in some places covered to the depth of four or five inches by a black vegetable mould. This yellow loam is remarkable for the tall rank grass called 'blue joint,' which skirts the margin of the river, and from four to five feet high, and extremely luxuriant."

"NATURAL GROWTH.—The forest trees are of a mixed growth, but the sugar maples are most abundant, and are of gigantic size. Elms, white birch, black and white ash abound. The soft wood grows mostly on the low lands, while the uplands in the rear are densely covered with hard wood trees, among which are scattered magnificent pines. On the Aroostook, it will be remarked, that very few if any hemlock trees exist,—(cedars taking their place, being mixed with spruce, fir, yellow birch, and various other kinds of hard wood,) while occur, scattering, some of the most lofty pine trees ever beheld."

"There are evident reasons why this should be the case, for the richest soils are always most crowded with a mixed growth, and the Aroostook soils are mostly of limestone alluvion, and are exceedingly rich and good settling lands, remarkable for their heavy crops of wheat, rye and other grains, and are certainly richer, as an agricultural district, than any other portion of Maine."

"MINERALS, &c.—Towards the conclusion of his report, Dr. Jackson says:—'The resources of the present season have brought to light many important resources in the public domain which were before unknown. Beds of iron ore of immense magnitude, favorably situated for advantageous operations, occur on the Aroostook, and all the marked characteristics of the regular anthracite coal formation exhibit themselves over a great belt of country from the Sebobe to the Aroostook and St. John, and extend to Temiscomata lake, near the frontier of Canada.'

"It will be at once perceived, that the country which we have explored is a most valuable territory, possessing every advantage required by settlers. Heavy timber offers a reward to the enterprising lumber dealer. A rich soil, capable of producing an average crop of twenty bushels of wheat to the acre, and in some cases producing from thirty to forty bushels, offers an ample reward to the husbandman. Inexhaustible supplies of limestone, valuable both for building materials and for agriculture. Vast and inexhaustible mines of rich iron ore, and interminable forests which will furnish an abundance of charcoal, required for the manufacture of the finest kinds of iron and steel—the country presents every natural advantage that might be required to call forth the enterprise and industry of the farmer and manufacturer."

The Report of the Secretary of the Board of Agriculture, before referred to, seems fully to corroborate the foregoing statements in relation to the

Situation and Quality of our Settling Lands.

Mr. Goodale, the Secretary, having in the summer of 1857, reconnoitered the settled portions of Aroostook county, in accordance with his official duties, says:—

"The portion of our unsettled territory which is believed at this time to present the greatest inducements to immigrants, is what is known as the Valley of the Aroostook, together with a tract fifty miles, more or less, south of this, embracing the five easternmost ranges of townships, and which is drained in part by other tributaries of the St. John, but principally by those of the Penobscot."

"The greater part of this territory, embracing upwards of two thousand square miles, is what is usually denominated settling land, although lumbering has been largely, and is still, to a considerable extent, carried on in some sections of it; in other portions no more timber now exists than will be needed for building purposes. The land throughout is uniformly good; in some of these townships scarce a lot of one hundred and sixty acres can be found which is not capable of being made a good farm, and but little waste land is believed to exist in any of them."

"The surface is more or less undulating, the easterly ranges of townships being less hilly, and more free from stone, than is usual in the State at large; the ranges west of these are more broken in surface, sometimes hilly, and with frequent boulders and outcrops of limestone, slate, &c."

"Some townships in the first range are so free from stones that even a sufficiency for wells, cellars, &c., is not always readily obtained."

"The soil is various, but consists mainly of a deep, rich, hazel loam, and is usually underlaid with a sub-stratum of limestone, sometimes, but to less extent, with slate, the depth varying from two to six or more feet. The soil seems to have originated mostly from the decomposition of limestone and slate. Beds of clay are occasionally found by digging at a moderate depth in various localities, and probably exist in sufficient quantity for building purposes. At No. 11, 5th Range, [now Ashland,] bricks have been made in some quantity. Lime also has been burned in the same vicinity."

First rate lime has been manufactured in No. 8, 5th Range, and in D, 1st Range. Quarries of marble, of fine quality, have also been discovered in the vicinity of the Aroostook river.

Mr. Goodale further says:—

"There is more or less interval bordering the streams, and a still larger extent of such as is, doubtless, of alluvial origin, but more elevated than what usually passes among us for interval land. That which predominates chiefly is what is ordinarily called 'strong hard wood soil,' and good for crops."

"In the vicinity of Houlton, the soil varies in character, some being lighter and some more tenacious, and here the average depth of plowing is less than in other sections, being from three to six inches only."

"Thirty or forty miles north of Houlton, as at Fort Fairfield and vicinity, the first plowing is often eight to ten inches deep, and with the most gratifying results. The soil generally exhibits unmistakable evidences of great inherent fertility, and of the land at large, it may be said, as of another in older story, in it 'thou mayest eat bread without scarceness.'

"The natural fertility of the soil is also shown in a satisfactory manner by the actual thrift and prosperity of the settlers, many of whom came here a few years ago, poor and destitute, and some seriously embarrassed, but are now in easy circumstances."

"CLIMATE.—This is the great bugbear in the minds of many, as an obstacle to successful farming anywhere in Maine; and Aroostook, being the most northerly county in the State, is often deemed more objectionable for this reason. But while it has its peculiarities, I failed to see cause to deem it the worst."

"It is an exceedingly healthy climate. Upon this point, I cannot do better than to quote from the late statistical report on the sickness and mortality in the army of the United States, compiled from the records of the Surgeon General's office, as the testimony of the surgeons stationed in Aroostook in 1844-5, when their reports were made, is both disinterested and conclusive, and reveals a remarkable freedom from pulmonary disease so common in most sections of New England."

"From Fort Kent we have the following:—

"The region adjacent to Fort Kent is probably one of the healthiest within the limits of the United States, and though rigorous, the climate seems to be productive of the most robust health. Fevers, and other diseases of a malarious origin, are unknown; and other acute diseases are by no means of common occurrence."

"This surgeon says of another, who had better opportunities than himself, that he not only never saw a case of consumption in the country, but that some inmates of the garrison who had suspicious symptoms when they came into it, recovered from them entirely."

"The children in and near the garrison have generally enjoyed the best of health, and have been afflicted with none of those complaints so common in warmer climates. It has been frequently made the subject of remark by the mothers, how vast the difference in this respect between Fort Kent and their former posts."

In another place the Secretary says:—

"The term during which cattle required to be fed from winter stores of for-

age, proved shorter than was anticipated, the autumnal feed being said to be abundant and good until the snow fell, and as soon as this disappeared in spring cattle could find plenty of fresh and nutritious grasses. Some of the residents who had been familiar with agricultural pursuits in other States, assured me that in this regard Aroostook possesses decided advantages over southern Maine or Massachusetts. The value of such pasturage will be readily appreciated by every practical farmer."

"A very noticeable peculiarity of the climate of Aroostook, is the exemption hitherto enjoyed from injurious droughts. Whether, and to what extent, this exemption may be attributed to the existence of primeval forests, and whether it may be expected to continue after the woodman's axe has done its work, may be a matter of some uncertainty; but the probability that they are intimately connected, the one with the other, adds force to the well known and abundant arguments against indiscriminate waste and strip, and in favor of retaining sufficient wood for fuel, timber, and especially for shelter to their homes, fields, orchards, cattle and crops."

"PRODUCTIONS.—All the small grains thrive well. Wheat is not so extensively grown as formerly, the fly, or midge, (commonly called weevil,) rust and mildew, being found serious drawbacks upon its profitable culture. I was informed by Hon. Nathaniel Blake of Fortage Lake, (number thirteen, in sixth range,) that the wheat had never troubled the grain there, and that it usually reaps twenty-five bushels per acre; but this was the only instance of entire exemption found, although at Patten and some other places, injury from the midge had been far less than from rust."

"Mr. Blake also stated of his locality, that frosts were usually two weeks or more later than at number eleven, some ten or twelve miles south of it."

"Mr. J. W. Haines, an old settler from Kennebec county, on Letter D, in first range, firmly holds from his own experience, that the fly, though often abundant, rarely injures the crop, unless rust, mildew, or some unfavorable atmospheric influence retards the growth of the plant, thus giving the maggot time to commit his ravages, as otherwise, the plant being perfectly healthy and thrifty, the grain fills plumply and is abundant, the maggots never so plenty."

"When successful, twenty to twenty-five bushels is considered a good crop. Instances of much larger yield were narrated."

"Mr. Haines stated that he had grown forty-one and a half bushels of spring wheat, of sixty pounds to the bushel, to the acre. This was on land which had been in grass for four years, and matured for potatoes the year previous; and that his neighbor, Mr. Goss, in an adjoining township, grew last year one hundred and thirty-five bushels of bearded wheat, on five acres, and in one instance, fifty-two and a half bushels of winter wheat on one acre of new land, from which no previous crop had been taken. This was mentioned as a very unusual crop, as winter wheat had rarely succeeded so well as spring wheat."

"Mr. Alfred Cushman of Golden Ridge, (number three in fifth range,) President of the Penobscot and Aroostook Agricultural Society, informed me, that in one instance, from two and a half bushels sowing, he had reaped one hundred and seventy-five bushels, on four acres, one acre of which growing to wheat, yielded only about half as much as the rest, thus indicating fifty bushels to the acre, on three acres. Since then he had been less successful, having experienced rust often, and mildew occasionally."

"OATS, BARLEY AND RYE, with fair treatment, grow luxuriantly, and yield bountifully. Several instances came to my knowledge, in which three successive crops of oats on the same land had yielded an average of fifty bushels or upwards per acre. The average production of these grains, under good treatment, may be set down as fifty bushels of oats, thirty of barley, and thirty to thirty-five of rye; the actual average would, however, be found at least twenty-five per cent. less than this."

"BUCKWHEAT is largely grown, and is probably gaining in estimation, for the remark was frequently made by residents, that although prejudiced hitherto against it, they had at length adopted its culture. Its yield varies from twenty or thirty to fifty bushels—sometimes considerably more. With good treatment, and on soil in good condition, forty to fifty bushels may be confidently expected. It is usually grown upon the poorest. Its weight is from forty-five to fifty pounds to the bushel, and it yields about one third of fine flour, which makes excellent bread and cakes; from a third to two fifths of a coarser description, but very nutritious and highly esteemed for swine and other animals; the remainder being principally hull, is of little or no worth."

"The success attending this grain in Aroostook, and the comparative extent to which it is grown, may be judged of from the fact, that by the census of 1850, this county, containing a little more than a fifth part of the population of the State, produced the previous year, eighty six thousand five hundred and twenty-nine bushels, while all the rest of the State produced only eighteen thousand and bushels."

"INDIAN CORN is not extensively grown in Aroostook county, but its cultivation seems steadily, rather than rapidly, on the increase. By careful selection of early seed, a fair crop is generally secured."

"As far north as number eleven, fifth range, I saw corn siled out at the end of July. Last year, Mr. Bean of Letter G, second range, raised fifty-one bushels of sound corn per acre. The yield is not usually above this, and the actual average probably below forty bushels."

"Mr. Cushman, at Golden Ridge, (number three, in fifth range,) some fifty miles south of number eleven, informed me that he had grown at the rate of two hundred and twenty bushels of ears per acre. He had, when I was there, a very promising field of corn, which was planted more closely than I had ever before seen, viz:—three feet by eighteen or twenty inches asunder, thus giving more than double the usual number of hills to the acre. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Cushman subsequently, at the State Fair in Bangor, early in October, and learned from him that an acre of this had been harvested, and the product proved to be two hundred and ten bushels of ears of sound corn, a very good crop for any where. The seed used, is partly the Canadian variety, and partly what is called there, the early Dutton, a twelve rowed sort, originally brought from Massachusetts, and gradually acclimated."

"ROOTS.—Large crops of these are as easily grown, perhaps more so, as in any other parts of New England. Potatoes are excellent and abundant, the usual crop being from two to three hundred bushels per acre. In some sections, very little or no injury has caused from diseases, and it is estimated by several persons, that for ten years past, not over a quarter of the crop had ever been lost from the rot in any locality. Turnips to the amount of five hundred bushels to the acre, are grown with no labor beyond brushing in the seed on new land, and perhaps a little thinning out, no hoeing or weeding being bestowed. Much larger crops can be grown with additional labor and care. Carrots are highly esteemed, the crop, with fair treatment, varying from six hundred to twelve hundred bushels per acre. I learned of one crop of eight hundred and sixty-eight bushels, by actual measure, to the acre, where the rust had materially checked the growth."

"GRASS.—No better district for hay, grazing and dairying, can be found in New England, than here. Indeed, I have never seen better in Orange County, New York, nor any where else—and should a person accustomed to much richer pastures than are usual in New England or New York, tramp over some of these, with red clover well up to the knees, and a dense mat of honey-suckle under foot, (the pastures tolerably well stocked too,) he could scarcely fail to deem it a country of rare excellence for grazing and dairying."

"Among the few exports from the Aroostook Valley, may be named hays and clover seed. Last year, Mr. John Allen, near Presque Isle, offered for premium a crop of two thousand and twenty-four pounds of clover seed, grown on seven acres, and which he sold at fifteen cents per pound. He stated the profit on the crop to be one hundred and sixty-three dollars and sixty cents, or upwards of twenty-three dollars per acre."

"In 1850, six hundred and sixty-one bushels of clover seed, or forty thousand pounds, and ten hundred and eighty bushels of other grass seeds, were grown in the county. Hays grass, or timothy, usually yields six or seven, and sometimes ten bushels of seed per acre."

"In one instance, I learned of one hundred and four bushels grown on ten acres."

"STOCK.—In the neighborhood of Presque Isle, there have been, through the exertions of members of the North Aroostook Agricultural Society, introductions of choice cattle, and a marked improvement has been the result. The Hereford and Durham blood prevails mostly in the crosses observed. Ayrshires were not known as such, but some cattle brought in from the neighboring Province of New Brunswick, and considered natives, bore strong evidence of an infusion of Ayrshire blood. The Ayrshire breed has been somewhat extensively introduced into New Brunswick."

"In other parts of Aroostook, I found no more attention paid to the selection of choice stock than prevails in some other counties in the State, and much less attention paid to stock-growing as a leading branch of agriculture, than it seemed to me there should be. Sheep husbandry receives little attention in comparison with what might be profitably bestowed upon it. The sheep which I saw there would average decidedly better for mutton than those of the State at large, the flocks having been improved by admixtures from those of Mr. Perley, a well known extensive stock-grower at Woodstock, N. B., near Houlton—and who rears principally, if not wholly, the pure Leicester breed."

"FRUIT.—Of the culture of fruit in Aroostook, it may be premature to speak with confidence; but the prospect is in favor of ultimate success. There are a number of nurseries established, principally of the apple, and many trees have been planted out. The smaller fruits, as currants, gooseberries, &c., &c., thrive perfectly well and yield freely."

"MARKETS.—The only market now existing in Aroostook for ordinary agricultural productions, is that created by the lumbering operations. This is generally a good one to an extent sufficient to absorb the surplus which the settlers now tilling the soil have to dispose of; but it is by no means a uniform one, varying as it necessarily must, with the fluctuations of that interest (proverbially uncertain) which creates it."

"ROADS, DISTANCES, &c.—Means of Communication.—From Bangor northerly, there is now a railroad in operation to Oldtown and Milford, twelve miles; (another railroad has been surveyed, and some grading done upon it, from Bangor to Lincoln, about fifty miles north;) thence (from Milford) the traveled road follows the east bank of the Penobscot as far as Mattawamkeag point, (which is the head of steam navigation on the Penobscot,) sixty-one miles from Bangor; thence, in a similar direction to the "forks of the road" at Molunkus, where it branches, the "Military road" extending in a north easterly direction to Houlton, and northwardly thence to Presque Isle, in the valley of the Aroostook, thence in the same direction to Violette Brook, in Van Buren plantation. From the "forks of the road" at Molunkus, the "Aroostook road" pursues a northerly course, passing through Benedicta, Golden Ridge, Patten, townships numbered five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, (Masardis) to number eleven, (now Ashland.) This is the centre from which are fitted out most of the parties for operations in timber. This road continues also in a similar direction to Fort Kent, (forty-eight miles further) which is on the northern boundary of the State, at the mouth of Fish river, and in latitude 47 deg. 15 min north, and longitude 68 deg. 35 min. west. From number 11, (now Ashland) (or Aroostook, the name of the post office here,) a road trends easterly in the valley of the Aroostook river to Presque Isle and Fort Fairfield, continued also to the mouth of the Aroostook and to Tobique, in New Brunswick."

"By these routes it is seventy-one miles from Bangor to the "Forks" at Molunkus; thence forty-four miles to Houlton, and forty-one more to Presque Isle; thence about thirty-five miles to the St. John river, at the mouth of Violette brook."

"From the "Forks," by the "Aroostook road," it is seventy-five miles to Ashland. From Ashland to Presque Isle is twenty-four miles, and thirteen thence to Fort Fairfield, and six more to Tobique, N. B."

Besides these, which are the principal ones, there are minor roads diverging from various points, and often intersecting some of the choicest lands in this region."

By the above mentioned routes, goods are now carried from Bangor to

Presque Isle, one hundred and fifty miles, at about thirty dollars per ton, and from Bangor to Ashland, one hundred and fifty miles, by the Aroostook road, at thirty-five to forty dollars per ton. Such rates add so materially to the cost of supplies brought thither, that it is no wonder if a cheaper mode of communication be sought. This, the eastern ranges of townships enjoy for so much of the year as the river St. John is navigable, which may average about five months. Freight is brought from the city of St. John to Tobique, within six miles of Fort Fairfield, at a rate varying from eight to eighteen dollars per ton; by steam to Fredericton, ninety miles, at all times when the river is not closed by ice, and when the depth of water serves; also by steam to Tobique, otherwise by tow boats, from Fredericton or Woodstock, up. From Tobique to Presque Isle is nineteen miles, and twenty-four miles thence to Ashland, and here I was assured by the traders and lumber men, that at the present time, not one twentieth part of the goods sold at, or of the supplies distributed from, this point, were brought thither from Bangor, whereas, formerly, nearly the whole were. They now procure them via the St. John, and, including some forty miles or more of land carriage over a hard road, at a cost for freight usually of about one half the charge from Bangor.

"An inspection of the map of this region will show that its natural channel for communication is toward, and through New Brunswick; and it would appear that the artificial channels which we have made to connect it with other sections of our own State, have not proved good enough to compete successfully with the St. John."

"The boundary line, never here a practically serious obstacle to interchange of commodities, has, since the reciprocity treaty went into operation, been little more than a nominal one; and the ease and intimacy of communication will probably soon be greatly increased by means of the St. Andrews and Quebec Railroad, now partially constructed and vigorously prosecuted, and which it is anticipated may be open for use as far as Woodstock or Richmond, near Houlton, in the course of another year. The southern terminus of this road, St. Andrews, lies just opposite Robbinston, midway between Eastport and Calais, and the track, when completed, will for some distance run close to our border."

"Under date of November 1, 1857, a correspondent writing from Fort Fairfield, says: 'The St. Andrews and Quebec Railroad is now opened forty miles; it will be opened by next September to Richmond and Woodstock, and be at Richmond, six miles from Houlton. When completed, it will run along near the boundary line the whole length of the east side of Aroostook county, and will be very convenient of access from the present settled portions of the county.'

"Is there any other way in which Aroostook can be saved to Maine, except either to annex New Brunswick, or underbid her in the matter of facilities for communication?"

"The idea of a satisfactory connection with the Atlantic seaboard, connected with a just appreciation of the great results which would flow therefrom, is by no means a novel one, but has been strongly urged in years past by far-seeing men; for example, in the Report of Hon. E. L. Hamlin, as Land Agent in 1839, we have the following:

"Upon a glance at the public lands, it will be seen that the fertile valley of the St. John river extends through the whole breadth of the northern part of the State, and with the Aroostook valley, includes about one-third part of our whole territory. The natural outlet of this country for trade and intercourse is through the Province of New Brunswick. To connect this region with the Atlantic seaboard, within the limits of our own State, it will be seen that the topography of the country distinctly marks out two great avenues of communication through the valleys of the Kennebec and Penobscot."

"That our seaboard will be connected with the St. John waters, sooner or later, by these two routes, either by canal or railroad, or both in part, there can be no doubt in the mind of any one who has watched the progress of internal improvements in other States, who considers the feasibility of opening these communications, and of their great practical importance in diverting the trade of this region from a foreign market, and increasing the wealth and population not only of the St. John valley, but of the whole State. The development of the agricultural resources of this valley would give a sustaining power to our commercial capital on the seaboard, a healthy impulse to manufactures, and would not fail in advancing the State at once to the position in the Federal Union, to which her natural advantages so justly entitle her."

"It is evident that the citizens of this State have not heretofore been fully impressed of the great value of our public domain. The golden opportunity which occurred at the time of the separation of Maine to acquire of Massachusetts her interests in the public lands, was suffered to pass unsecured by us, and the appropriations heretofore made for the construction of roads towards the interior, and for public improvements, seem to have been reluctantly yielded, instead of being the spontaneous acts of the whole Legislature, and as indicating a spirit and feeling worthy of our great resources. So long as the public mind is possessed of doubts and fears, and misgivings, and until there is manifested an honest feeling of State pride and a just confidence in our own means and resources, it will be in vain to undertake any public work of magnitude with any rational hope of success."

"I am aware that serious objections are entertained by many against all works of internal improvement, when undertaken by the State, and where it becomes necessary to borrow money. It cannot, however, be forgotten that such objections have been raised in other States, particularly in New York and Pennsylvania. When the former State commenced upon the great work of the Erie canal, it was denounced as the 'big ditch' that would engulf the fortunes of the State, and men high in public estimation pronounced the scheme to be 'visionary and chimerical, and at least one hundred years in advance of the age.' The result has shown how much this portion of the community has been mistaken; and I can entertain no doubt that a judicious system of public works on the part of the State, having reference to the settlement and cultivation of the public lands, would, in the end, be as signally successful as have been the public works in other States."

"Mr. Goodale adds:—'In looking back over the eighteen years since the above was penned, who can possibly doubt, to-day, that had the above suggestion of a railroad from the Aroostook to the Penobscot met with public favor, and been carried out at an early day, that whatever might have been its success merely in the light of a pecuniary investment, the public domain would have greatly increased in value, and the whole State would have gained in population, wealth and power, with a persistence and rapidity to which we are now utter strangers. [NOTE.—Perhaps for no desirable road in New England, is there a favorable route more distinctly marked by nature, than for this, viz: by the east bank of the Penobscot from Bangor to Mattawamkeag Point; thence toward the Forks of the Mattawamkeag, near where the Baskheung comes in; thence by a natural valley to near the origin of Presque Isle river, and following its valley to near its junction with the Aroostook.'

Mr. Goodale further says:—

"In estimating the comparative advantages of emigration to the new lands of our own State, and to those of the great west, there are many considerations to be taken into account. Land may be had cheaply in either case, but cheaper here than there, in fact, almost for nothing, as the half dollar per acre, which the State asks, may be chiefly paid in making the settler's own roads—roads which he would have to make for his own convenience, if not thus paid for by the State. But in going west, cheapness ends with the price of land. The settler may get enough at a dollar and a quarter per acre, provided he go far enough from roads and rivers to find such as is not already taken up; but hence, barn fences are as necessary as land, and when he proceeds to their erection, he finds timber can only be obtained at a high price, usually at considerable distance, often having to be carted several days' journey. Other building materials, bricks, lime, stone, nails, in fact, all, bear high rates. Labor, especially mechanical labor, is costly and scarce. These considerations alone, leaving out many others, neither few nor trifling, (as the scarcity of water, and its bad quality, when obtained; the agues, prostrating fevers, &c.) I found to have proved operative in deciding the question in the minds of some residents of Aroostook, who had visited the West for the purpose of personal examination, and deliberate balancing of advantages. They came home, content to remain, fully satisfied of the superiority of a residence here, and congratulating themselves that they went first to look before selling out, and thus taking a step not so easily or cheaply recalled—satisfied, that although a man possessing abundant means, might there obtain higher rates of interest, and find more tempting opportunities for speculation—the man with little besides strong hands and a willing mind had a better prospect here!"

As corroborative of the foregoing statement, the following letter, published in a recent number of the "Aroostook Pioneer," a newspaper printed at Presque Isle, is to the point:—

"MR. EDITOR:—I saw in one of your papers, which I received from my brother, a piece headed 'Sources of Prosperity in Maine.' It spoke particularly of the endless drain of population, and the injurious results of the same. Sir, I feel that it is true. I feel that State myself some years since. I have been since then over a large portion of our country, and I wish to give my young friends in Maine some advice. I have been in all of the western States but four, and those I have seen are the ones principally to which our young men emigrate, and I assure you that I have never seen that place yet where a young man could do any better than he could in Maine."

As for farming, the land in some of our western States, it is true, is more productive, but it is not as well for a farmer to raise one half as much produce, and get double the price for it, as to raise a large quantity and get less. I would advise all my young friends to remain at home and be contented by their own firesides. The peace, prosperity and happiness of our State depend upon it."

It is true that she may have some disadvantages; her rocky, hilly soil, (in the older counties of the State,) cannot be worked with the same ease as that of the other States of the Union can, but the industry of the people more than make up for that. WM. F. DELAITE.

Hannibal, Mo., March 5, 1858.

Mr. Delaite was a native of Sebec, Piscataquis county, Me., and with his father and brothers was among the early pioneers of Aroostook, where his brothers still reside.

The above letter comes from a highly respectable source, and is entitled to full credit.

In conclusion, the undersigned would say, that he has been engaged for a large portion of time, for the last twenty-five years, in surveying and exploring the wilderness lands not only in the County of Aroostook, and elsewhere in this State, (both for Maine and Massachusetts)—but among the Mineral lands of New Hampshire, and the Timber and bottom lands of Canada West. I trust, therefore, that I shall not be deemed egotistical in saying that I feel myself qualified, by long and practical observation, to speak with confidence and certainty of the fertility of the soil—its capacities for production, and the great advantages it holds out to those who intend to pursue the business of farming.

I am not interested, directly or indirectly in an acre of wild land, except the wood lot attached to my farm in Corinth, in the County of Penobscot, and have no motive or desire except to promote and advance the prosperity of our noble State, and the diffusion of reliable information, to induce thousands of the young men of Maine and New England in search of homes, to select and occupy the fertile lands in the valley of the Aroostook.

I can, from personal experience and observation, bear my humble testimony to the accuracy and truthfulness of the representations contained in the foregoing extracts from the Reports of Dr. JACKSON, Dr. HOLMES, the Hon. S. L. GOODALE, and others.

No where in the Northern or Western States is land offered at so low a rate—no where is there a more healthy climate, with a rich soil, a plenty of fine timber, and good water.

The settler is surrounded with actual farmers, (for the State sells to no others,) with schools, and the advantages of New England Society.

The soil is adapted to the production of as large crops of wheat, rye, barley, oats, buckwheat, and potatoes, as any other land in the East or the West.

Droughts, which are so often destructive in the West, if they occur in Aroostook, are very rare, and the production of grass is immense.

No country is superior to it, in its capacity for the finest pasturage.

From a view of all the facts in relation to these lands, it is believed that an uncommon opportunity is now offered, for young men especially, to obtain good farms "without money," and almost "without price."

In the West all the best locations are occupied, and the price of land in those localities, is from twenty to fifty dollars per acre. In Aroostook, the roads are opened to the lands, and the best locations are, and will be ready for those who choose to occupy them, at once. Let me say to those who are going to the Aroostook to explore for the purpose of locating themselves, 'Don't be in a hurry! Exercise cool and dispassionate judgment, and examine all the circumstances for and against this or that locality. A man in going there to settle on new land, should have a little capital to help himself with, till he can make a clearing and obtain a crop, and a large fund of Enterprise, Industry and Economy.—With these last requisites, and a good constitution, he can hardly fail of success.

In going from Bangor to the Valley of the Aroostook, a person may take the daily Stage to Mattawamkeag Point, for \$3,—or to the same place by rail-road and steam-boat, (during the season of its running,) for \$2 38—thence to Houlton for \$3 and thence to Presque Isle for \$2, more. Or from Mattawamkeag to No. 11,

(Ashland,) via Patten, the stage fare is about the same as, by the former route, to Presque Isle.

To show the cost of clearing land in Aroostook, I will here introduce the following letter of a well-known and extensive farmer of that County:—

Noah Barker, Esq., Land Agent, Bangor, Me.,
DEAR SIR:—In answer to your inquiry in regard to clearing land in Aroostook,—to which I am not a stranger,—I would say that it costs on an average ten dollars per acre, viz: two dollars to fell the trees; then to do justice to the operator clearing said land, the limbs should be lopped off before the fire goes through, which generally costs about one dollar and fifty cents per acre; and six dollars and a half more to fit it for the harrow for the first crop. In the fall, after the crop is off, I usually put in the plow, and root it over, as the phrase is, and the next spring sow it again to oats and grass, which generally produces from one and a half, to two tons per acre, for a series of years, of good hay.—Yours respectfully,
Smyrna, Me., April, 1858.

LEVI BERRY.

I have now imparted all the information relative to the settling lands of Maine, which is deemed important to the emigrant, before going to examine them for himself.

NOAH BARKER, LAND AGENT.

STATE LAND OFFICE,
BANGOR, ME., MAY 1, 1858.

